

LIBELLULA GRANDIS.



CHARACTER GENERICUS.

Os maxillosum : maxillis pluribus.

Antennæ thorace breviores.

Alæ extensæ.

Cauda (maris) hamoso-forcipata.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 901.

CHARACTER SPECIFICUS, &c.

LIBELLULA thorace lineis quatuor flavis, corpore variegato.

Lin. Syst. Nat. Gmel. p. 2675.

LIBELLULA GRANDIS. L. alis glaucescentibus, thorace lineis quatuor flavis.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 903.

Reaum. ins. 6. t. 35. f. 3.

Roes. ins. 2. *aquat.* 2. t. 2. 3.

Abunde probat pulcherrima et splendidissima hæc Libellula, quam longe inter se discrepant in eodem animalculo larvæ & insecti perfecti forma atque indoles. Ova, quæ dum aquas prætervolat, deponere solet parens, innum petunt, et certo temporis spatio excluduntur larvæ, quæ adultæ repræsentantur in tabula; pupa seu chrysalide nihil a larva differente, nisi

nisi quod appareant alarum principia, brevibus the-
cis super tergum inclusa. Voracissima larvarum
gula insectorum imbecilliorum plurimis mortem in-
fert; ad hoc enim donantur instrumento apprimere
idoneo, forcipis vice fungente, geniculato, quod
quiescentibus super os retrahitur, ad prædam anteni
captandam subito in longinquum projicitur. Cum
in aquis vixerit larva duos circiter annos, stipite
plantæ alicujus aquaticæ in seenso, solis calore gra-
datim diffringitur cutis, et prorepat insectum plene
formatum; relictis in caule exuviis quasi illæsis et
vulneris expertibus.

Cum primum e carcere liberatur, alæ teneræ in
parvum spatium contrahuntur; clapsa autem qua-
si semihora ad summum expansis, tentat Libellula
aeris nisus; ex illo tempore si in aquis nuperrime
relictis diutius fuerit immersa, non minus mortem
subitura, quam antea esset larva per idem tempus
aeri exposita.

Libellulæ insecta imbecilliora voraciter prædantur
volatu rapidissimo. Mira quoque oculi conforma-
tio, cujus cornea seu tunica exterior in lenticularum
æque convexarum millia multa dividitur, clarius
cernitur in hoc insecto quam in aliis.

Species quam depinximus, e maximis est Libellu-
larum Europæarum, et per Angliam vulgata. Ico-
nem elegantem et fidelem ex Roeselii opere cui ti-
tulus *Insecten Belustigung* qua præstantiorem ex-
primere desperavimus, imitari et in nostram tabel-
lam transferre non dubitavimus.



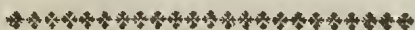
42
H. J.



Pl. 1

London, Published by W. Woodley, Bookseller, No. 10, Strand.

THE
GREAT LIBELLULA.



GENERIC CHARACTER.

Mouth consisting of several mandibles.

Antennæ very slender, filiform, shorter than the thorax.

Wings spreading.

Abdomen lengthened.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER, &c.

Long-Bodied variegated LIBELLULA, with four yellow lines on the thorax.

The variegated LIBELLULA.

GREAT LIBELLULA or Dragon-Fly.

This most beautiful and brilliant insect affords a singular instance of the wonderful diversity of form and manners between the larva and the complete state of one and the same animal. The eggs deposited by the parent insect while it hovers over the waters it frequents, sink to the bottom, and after a certain space, hatch into larvæ, which, when arrived at full growth, are of the figure represented on the annexed plate; the pupa or chrysalis itself differing in no other respect from the larva, than in shewing the rudiments of the future wings, which are enveloped in short cases or processes on the back of the animal. The larvæ are remarkably voracious, and destroy great multitudes of the weaker water-insects, being furnished with a formidable apparatus for seizing their prey, so constructed as to fold over
the

the face when at rest, and to be suddenly thrown forwards to a considerable extent when in action. After having remained about two years in this state, the animal ascends the stem of some water-plant, and sitting some time in the sunshine, gives birth to the insect in its perfect or ultimate form, which gradually disengages itself from the skin of the chrysalis, leaving it in its former appearance on the stem. At the period of its first exclusion, the wings, which are then very weak and tender, are complicated into a very short compass; but in about the space of half an hour they become expanded to their full dimensions, and the animal at once commences an inhabitant of the air, and would be as effectually destroyed by a continued submersion under water, as the larva would before have been by exposure to the air.

The Libellulæ in their complete state prey on the smaller insects, and are remarkable for the vigour and celerity of their flight. They also exhibit with greater clearness, and on a larger scale than any other insects, the wonderful structure of the eye, the cornea or exterior coat of which is composed of many thousands of hexagonal, double-convex lenses or segments.

The species here represented is one of the largest of the European Libellulæ, and is very common in our own country. It has been so elegantly and accurately exhibited by Roesel in his *Insecten Belustigung* that it would be in vain to attempt a more expressive representation; for which reason the figures on the present plate are copied from that excellent publication.